THE HEALING ARTS

RADIATION PROTECTION COMMISSION

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH

TENTH ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

1990 - 1991

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I. THE COMMISSION'S MISSION STATEMENT

The Commission's mission is to promote patient safety in the use of radiation within the healing arts.

II. INTRODUCTION

This is the tenth annual report of the Healing Arts Radiation Protection (H.A.R.P.) Commission to the Minister of Health, as required by Section 16(2) of the H.A.R.P. Act, 1980. This report covers the Commission's activities during the period of April, 1990 to March, 1991.

Last year, in the 1989 - 1990 Annual Report, the Commission presented its three-year strategic plan. This year, as a follow-up to the strategic plan, the Commission has summarized all of its activities for the past fiscal year. Each summary relates to the goals and objectives set out in the strategic plan.

In future, the strategic plan will be updated and amended as goals and objectives are met and new points are added. This will allow the plan to be current and relevant on a continuing basis.

Many of the Commission's activities this year have centered around the issues of quality control standards for radiation therapy, patient entrance exposure limits and image quality standards. The Commission's work on these issues is outlined in Section VI of this report, the Summary of Activities 1990 - 1991. Much work still remains to be done and the Commission looks forward to this challenge in 1991 - 1992.

III. THE COMMISSION'S OPERATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Commission continues to adhere to the following operational philosophy:

> The Commission seeks to create a co-operative environment that permits positive changes within the health care system for the benefit of the patient.

IV. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission was established to:

a) advise the Minister on all matters relating to the health and safety of patients in respect of irradiation by x-rays;

b) oversee the continuing development of an X-ray Safety Code;

c) review the contents of courses in the operation of x-ray machines and x-ray equipment and approve the courses it considers satisfactory;

d) examine, study and report to the Minister on such matters, including health screening programs involving the use of x-rays, as the Minister may refer to the Commission for this purpose; and

e) perform such other duties as are assigned to it by or under this or any other Act.

V. METHOD OF OPERATION

The Commission holds an average of one meeting each month and conducts its business by consensus. When needed, additional formal or informal meetings are held by the Commission, the advisory committee chairpersons and members of the six advisory committees.

In addition, the commission routinely receives briefs from special-interest groups and individuals; responds to correspondence and general inquiries, or refers these matters to the appropriate advisory committee(s); schedules and receives reports from advisory committees on issues referred to them; and submits reports and/or recommendations to the Minister of Health.

In order to assist the Commission with safety issues in relation to irradiation from x-rays, advisory committees were established in six broad areas relating to health disciplines. These include Chiropody (Podiatry), Chiropractic Medicine, Dentistry, Medical Radiology, Physics, and Radiological Technology. Subject to the approval of the Minister, the Commission may establish additional advisory committees as required, for assistance.

The governing bodies and professional associations for each of the health disciplines noted above nominate members to their respective advisory committee. The Commission reviews the nominations and appoints committee members. Since the public is well represented by the lay members of the Commission, it is not necessary to appoint lay members to the advisory committees, as committee tasks are highly specialized and technical in nature.

The Commission establishes each committee's quorum and other procedural methods where appropriate; and determines the order of priorities, tasks and deadlines.

Once again, for 1990 - 1991, each Commissioner took special responsibility for an advisory committee and attended that committee's meetings from time to time.

The Commission welcomes comments and suggestions on its programs and activities. Individuals or special-interest groups wishing to make a presentation to the Commission on a topic or issue related to x-rays may write to:

HEALING ARTS RADIATION PROTECTION COMMISSION
Project Co-ordinator
7 Overlea Boulevard, 6th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4H 1A8

VI. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES DURING 1990 - 1991

Strategic Plan

In last year's annual report the Commission outlined a number of its goals and objectives for the period covering 1990 - 1992. A year has now passed since the strategic plan was developed. In 1990 - 1991 the Commission worked toward fulfilling several of the goals and objectives identified in their strategic plan. The following is a summary outcome report on the strategic plan:

Goal:	**Monitoring maximum radiation protection in mammography.**
Tasks Completed:	The Commission met with representatives of the Ontario Breast Screening Program and discussed their program; quality assurance procedures; and radiation protection/safety issues. As a result of these meetings, the Commission and its advisory committees reviewed the program's quality control / quality assurance manual in detail and offered comments and suggestions for improvement.
Future Action(s) Required:	In addition, the Commission plans to review mammography training programs for both radiologists and radiology technologists. This review will determine if these programs are as current and as thorough as possible.

Goal: **Improve radiation protection by developing image quality standards.**

Tasks Completed: In March of 1991, the Commission established a work group to study phantom development and image quality standards. The Phantom Development Work Group includes a radiologist, radiological technologists, physicists, an equipment service specialist, a film specialist, a chiropractor and representatives from the Ministry of Health's X-ray Inspection Service. The Commission requested that the Work Group:

1) Identify the various diagnostic radiographic and fluoroscopic procedures that would benefit (in terms of image quality improvements) from the use of a test phantom;

2) Rank these procedures in order of priority;

3) Review and assess phantoms that are already available or are under development; identify procedures for which these phantoms may be useful in assessing image quality;

4) Recommend to the Commission how an appropriate phantom should be developed for those procedures where a phantom does not exist;

5) Recommend to the Commission any amendment(s) to the Regulations and Guidelines that may be required in order to support minimum image quality and dose measurement standards and the use of test phantoms; and

6) Submit interim reports to the Commission concerning the Work Group's progress.

The Work Group began meeting in April of 1991. The Commission anticipates that the majority of the Work Group's goals will be completed in 1992.

Goal: **Monitor maximum radiation protection and quality assurance for radiation therapy.**

Tasks Completed: A Radiation Therapy Work Group was established in July of 1989. This work group was given the task of evaluating the need for uniform quality control standards in radiation therapy facilities. In January of 1991, the Work Group submitted their final report to the Commission. The report concluded that there was a need for a standardized quality control program and recommended the establishment of a Radiation Therapy Advisory Committee.

This Advisory Committee would:

a) develop standards for patient safety for radiation therapy in Ontario;
b) encourage, by voluntary means, the implementation and monitoring of these standards;
c) establish a review process to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the voluntary process.

The Commission decided to accept the Radiation Therapy Work Group's recommendations. The Commission has requested that the Minister of Health approve the establishment of a permanent Radiation Therapy Advisory Committee.

Goal:	**Determine the role of the H.A.R.P. Commission in Nuclear Medicine.**
Tasks Completed:	The Commission has discussed this goal with its advisory committees. A plan of action was decided upon which calls for the Commission to meet with experts and organizations interested in nuclear medicine. These meetings will enable the Commission to determine if its involvement in nuclear medicine is required and, if so, what its role should be.
Future Action(s) Required:	These meetings have been deferred until the Health Professions Legislative Review process has been completed.

Goal: **Examine the relationship between radiation protection and professional issues (i.e. peer review).**

Tasks Completed: The Chairperson of the H.A.R.P. Commission is also a member of the Independent Health Facilities Quality Assurance Sub-Committtee. This committee is currently reviewing quality assurance and peer review issues as they relate to the radiological community.

In addition, the Commission has ongoing contact with a number of professional associations and governing bodies. These organizations include:

- Ontario Board of Directors Chiropractic
- Ontario Chiropractic Association
- Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario
- Ontario Dental Nurses and Assistants Association
- Ontario Society of Oral Radiologists
- Ontario Dental Association
- Ontario Dental Hygienists Association
- Ontario Medical Association
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- Canadian Association of Radiologists
- Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine
- Board of Regents of Chiropody
- Ontario Podiatric Medical Association
- Ontario Association of Medical Radiology Technologists
- Board of Radiological Technicians
- Ontario Hospital Association
- Ontario Association of Radiology Managers

Through contact with these organizations the Commission is kept informed about all professional issues which may affect radiation safety.

Goal: **Develop a Public Relations plan.**

Tasks Completed: The Commission's "public" includes many various groups and individuals including professional associations and governing bodies within the radiological community; hospitals; private clinic owners; the citizens of Ontario; and manufacturers and suppliers of x-ray equipment to name just a few.

In order to improve public relations, the Commission has developed and published a strategic plan. The strategic plan and follow-up report included in this year's annual report allow the Commission to communicate its goals and objectives directly to its various publics. The Commission is committed to this procedure as it promotes accountability.

In addition to the above, the Commission has met with a number of individuals and organizations to exchange information and develop a better understanding of radiation safety and the work of the Commission. During the past fiscal year the Commission has met with:

- Representatives of the Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine
- The Ministry of Health's Director of X-ray Safety
- Representatives of the Ontario Breast Screening Program
- The Ministry of Health's Director of the Women's Health Bureau
- The Executive Director of the Ministry of Health's Corporate Policy Division
- Representatives of the Ontario Board of Directors of Chiropractic

Goal: **Update the existing H.A.R.P. Legislation, Regulations and Guidelines as required.**

Tasks Completed: The Commission initiated a review of its regulations in 1988. The review was completed in 1989 with a number of proposed amendments to the Regulations. These proposed amendments were sent to the Minister of Health for review and approval in July of 1989. Since then, there has been a change in government and this has caused a delay in the amendment process. It is hoped that the amendments will be introduced during the latter half of 1991.

In the interim and because time has passed, the proposed amendments have once again been circulated to the advisory committees for a final review.

Goal: **Review the structure of the H.A.R.P. Commission and advisory committee system to improve functioning and the decision making process.**

Tasks Completed: The Commission has introduced a new communications protocol which will improve the dissemination of information to organizations (and their members) with representation on a H.A.R.P. advisory committee.

In addition, a "job description" has been developed for members of the Commission and advisory committees. This job description is sent to nominating organizations to aid them in selecting a representative.

The Commission encourages any individual or organization with comments or suggestions on our programs and activities to write at:

Healing Arts Radiation Protection Commission
7 Overlea Boulevard, 6th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4H 1A8

VII. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission, its composition, responsibilities and powers were established under the authority of Section 15 of the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act. The Commission's work represents an active and vigorous effort to serve the public interest in the area of radiation protection and safety.

Members are appointed to the Commission by the Lieutenant Governor's Order in Council for a term of up to, but not exceeding, six consecutive years. In order to ensure that the Commission functions independently of the providers of x-ray services and of the government, membership is restricted to lay persons who are not in the public service of the Province and who are not and never have been, members of any governing body or registered health discipline.

Commission Members:

Gerard Charette (Chairperson)	Windsor
Sandra Mark (Vice Chairperson)	Ottawa
Nigel Baillie	Toronto
Shirley Gauthier	Dryden
Aaron Glassman	Toronto

VIII. MEMBERSHIP AND MANDATE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Commission is supported by six advisory committees. The advisory committees were established under Section 17 of the H.A.R.P. Act and represent each of the following disciplines:

1. Chiropody (Podiatry)
2. Chiropractic
3. Dentistry
4. Medical Radiology
5. Physics
6. Radiological Technology

The committees assist and advise the Commission on:

- educational standards in x-ray safety;
- certification of all operators;
- quality assurance programs required for each class of facility;
- maintenance of appropriate standards for facilities, equipment and operators;
- professional and technological matters related to x-ray safety;
- updates and additions to H.A.R.P. Regulations and Guidelines;
- other matters referred to them by the Commission.

The Commission plans to request approval for an additional committee to advise them on radiation therapy matters.

Advisory Committee Members

With the exception of the Physics Advisory Committee, whose members are nominated by the Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine, membership on each advisory committee consists of at least one representative from both the governing body and the professional association concerned. In addition, a member of the Physics Advisory Committee also serves on each of the other advisory committees.

The following is a list of members who served on, or were appointed to an advisory committee during the period covered by this report:

Chiropractic Advisory Committee

Dr. Donald Henderson (Chairperson) - Ontario Chiropractic Association	Islington
Dr. Leonard Hardman - Board of Directors Chiropractic	Unionville
Dr. Brian Wilson (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	Hamilton

Dentistry Advisory Committee

Dr. Paula Sikorski (Chairperson) - Ontario Dental Association	Toronto
*Dr. Curtis Caldwell (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	Toronto
Dr. Roger Ellis - Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario	Toronto
Ms. Mary Lou Fischer - Ontario Dental Nurses and Assistants Association	London
**Dr. Michael Pharaoh - Ontario Society of Oral Radiologists	Toronto
**Dr. John Rowlands (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	Toronto
Ms. Shirley Silverman - Ontario Dental Hygienists Association	Toronto

* Denotes member appointed during period covered by thi report

** Denotes member retired during period covered by this report

Medical Radiology Advisory Committee

Dr. Alastair Scarth (Chairperson) - Ontario Medical Association - Radiology Section	Barrie
Dr. Ian Cunningham (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	London
Dr. Gerald Gill - College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario	Hamilton
Dr. Ted Lansdown - Canadian Association of Radiologists	Toronto
Dr. William Mills - Independent	Ottawa
Dr. Cyril Rotenberg - Independent	Toronto

Physics Advisory Committee

*Dr. Michael Bronskill (Chairperson)	Toronto
*Dr. Curtis Caldwell	Toronto
Dr. Ian Cunningham	London
Dr. Ting-Yim Lee	London
**Dr. John Rowlands	Toronto
Dr. Brian Wilson	Hamilton
**Dr. Martin Yaffe	Toronto

- All members of the Physics Advisory Committee represent the Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine.

Chiropody (Podiatry) Advisory Committee

**Dr. David Weston (Chairperson) - Board of Regents of Chiropody	Kitchener
*Dr. Robert Goldberg - Board of Regents of Chiropody	Willowdale
Dr. Ting-Yim Lee (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	London
Dr. Paul Lezner - Ontario Podiatric Medical Association	Willowdale

Radiological Technology Advisory Committee

*Ms. Anne Robertson (Chairperson) - Ontario Association of Radiology Managers	Owen Sound
*Dr. Douglas Alton - Board of Radiological Technicians	Toronto
**Dr. Judith Ash - Board of Radiological Technicians	Toronto
*Dr. Michael Bronskill (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	Toronto
*Mr. Ernie Edmonds - Board of Radiological Technicians	Hamilton
**Mr. John Gillis - Board of Radiological Technicians	Brantford
*Mr. Thomas Holland - Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Technologists	Ottawa
Mr. Alex McKinnon - Ontario Hospital Association	Kingston
**Mr. Rick Roberts - Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Technologists	Guelph
**Dr. Martin Yaffe (Physicist) - Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine	Toronto

IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Commission wishes to thank each member of the advisory committees and acknowledge their excellent efforts in assisting with the work of the Commission. The knowledge and advice they provide to the Commission contributes enormously to patient safety and radiation protection in Ontario.

In addition, the Commission would like to thank the following Ministry of Health staff for their advice and assistance.

Mr. Joseph Ritchie
Chief
X-ray Inspection Service

Ms. Susan Elworthy
Project Co-ordinator
X-ray Inspection Service

Mrs. Margo Kipis
Administrative Secretary
X-ray Inspection Service

The Commission would also like to thank and acknowledge Dr. Walter Lumsden, Medical Advisor to the Commission. The Commission is grateful for Dr. Lumsden's support and guidance.